

BULLETIN

WORLD BOOK FAIR

8th February 1998

BOOKS – HARBINGERS OF FREEDOM

Arvind Gupta

The inauguration of the 13th World Book Fair was held at the Hamsadhwani Open Air Theatre of Pragati Maidan, at 11 A. M. It started with an invocation by the artists of the Gandharva Mahavidyalya. Dr. Varsha Das, Chief Editor-Joint Director of the National Book Trust, welcomed the eminent French philosopher Prof. Michel Serres, and the Padma Bhushan celebrity Indian philosopher Prof. D P Chattopadhyay and luminaries

include important book releases, meetings with eminent authors and Jnanpith awardees along with recitations by women poets from all over Asia. The WBF has been organised against heavy odds and there were bound to be a few lapses. Sri Gupta welcomed criticism and voices of dissent, as this would provide the NBT with new insight and added strength to shoulder its responsibility.



from the publishing world Sri Durgadas Gupta, Director NBT, Dr. S Nadig, Chairman NBT, Sri Sukumar Das, Sri Sukhpal Gupta, Sri Vishwanath, Sri S K Bhatia and Sri H L Gupta.

Sri Durgadas Gupta, welcomed the audience on this sacred day of Ekadashi - the 11th day of Vasant. He informed that the WBF would hold several important literary events, which will in-

clude important book releases, meetings with eminent authors and Jnanpith awardees along with recitations by women poets from all over Asia. The WBF has been organised against heavy odds and there were bound to be a few lapses. Sri Gupta welcomed criticism and voices of dissent, as this would provide the NBT with new insight and added strength to shoulder its responsibility.

animal tales of the *Panchtantra* to the French. La Fontaine was deeply influenced by them. Many French fables can trace their origin to India. In a sense, the fantasy of French children since the 17th century, have been influenced by India. He thanked the Indian people for indirectly educating the French children.

Today hi-tech CD-ROMS and Internet are profoundly changing our ethics, ways and relationships. It is a historical moment of transition. What can we learn? We will never lose our old fashioned method of communication - our books. Modern technology has provided us with our own personal home printing press. New technology will change the world. It will change the very nature of work. But no technology will replace the book, because the book maintains an organic relationship with our body. "If I were to write a new book", Prof. Serres said, "it will be titled *OUR DIFFERENT BOOKS, OUR COMMON BODY*."

A MESSAGE FOR CHILDREN OF THE WORLD

ALL MEN ARE EQUAL AND MUST
LOVE ONE ANOTHER

MICHEL SERRES

WHEN THE BODY AND MIND
ARE PLASTIC, NURTURE THEM
AND GIVE THEM JOYOUS
INFORMATION TO EXPAND,
HEIGHTEN AND DEEPEN
THEIR PERCEPTION

D P CHATTOPADHYAY

After lightening the inaugural lamp, Prof. D P Chattopadhyay started with an inspiring message "Light is to darkness, what books are to ignorance." He highlighted the importance of books. Books are not dead between their bound covers. Books shape our dreams. Books are harbingers of freedom. Books bridge decades and span centuries. They make the past present and take us into the future. Books are custodians of ancient wisdom. They simplify the complex for our benefit. Books sharpen our intellect. Books introduce children to new worlds-beyond their schools.

Prof. Chattopadhyay, in his erudite speech traced the historical development of the book in Asia. The earliest books were written on *Bhojpatra*, *Talpatra* and clay tiles. Against the traditional backdrop of the *Guru-Shishya parampara*, the modern electronic media onslaught is very impersonal. Today, humans are getting swamped by information. He advised a perceptive organisation of information to make it joyous. He hoped that the WBF will augment this cause.

Thereafter, Dr. S Nadig, Chairman, NBT emphasised the importance of the 13th WBF for three specific reasons:

- it was the 50th year of India's Independence;
- it was the Silver Jubilee year of the World Book Fair;
- the focus on this year's fair was on Asia.

The NBT, he said, had ambitious plans to give a fillip to the Readers' Club movement. NBT also plans to translate world-class books into vernacular Indian languages, and making them available to the reading fraternity at a reasonable price. He cited the close bond between the author and the reader by quoting Walt Whitman, "He who touches my book, touches me".

AN EVENING WITH RUSKIN BOND

Nimeran Sahukar

With considerable excitement the invitees to 'an evening with Ruskin Bond', made their way to Hall No.5 to face an author whose fascinating



tales hold special attraction for both the young and old. The invitation was extended by well-known publishers, 'Ratna Sagar' to inaugurate the release of Ruskin Bond's latest collection of children's stories *A Bond with the Mountains*.

Mr. Ruskin Bond chatted unassumingly with his admirers. He said he had been motivated strongly throughout his writing, by the natural surroundings he lived in. In reply to a question as to what had made him take writing as a profession, he said, 'it was both an aptitude for writing and a love for it that prompted the feeling.'

The inauguration commenced with Tapas Guha's niece Sushmita releasing the books, Tapas Guha being the illustrator for most of Ruskin Bond's books expressed the natural ease with which the illustrations took shape, due to the fact that the language was simple and so expressive.

Mr. Bond said that this was the first time a book of his was being released at a Book Fair and extended his thanks to Ratna Sagar and Mr Denish Jain for making this possible. He said they had brought out the book in record time considering the fact that he had given the manuscript to them only three weeks ago. The title of his book was suggested by Ms Zaidi, an editor with Ratna Sagar.

Ruskin Bond, explained that the theme of his story was largely inspired by his love for the hill, its complexity and beauty and the fact that he had spent most of his life amidst these surroundings becoming an integral part of his life.

He went into a nostalgia about the days when he was a 'beginner,' and said the 'hills had been very kind to him,' and when one door closed to the young author, another opened almost immediately. He had curtailed his writing to about half an hour a day due to his failing eyesight.

Asked by a member of the audience if he curtailed his language to reach the level of children, he said, "I like to be myself in expressing what I feel, and I do not think of children as children but our young readers, who can understand". On being asked why poetry is a dying art, he said, 'it was up to the teachers and parents to inculcate a love of poetry' to bring it alive!

IMPRESSIONS

Beginning with a trickle, the World Book Fair opened to a large crowd of Book lovers. Scarcely finding room to walk, stalls of several well-known publishers were overcrowded. Opinions of the visitors varied to the extent that some found it: a fascinating new world to captivate one completely; Sonal Sahni, a college student found it "quite confusing and disorganised", she felt quite lost.

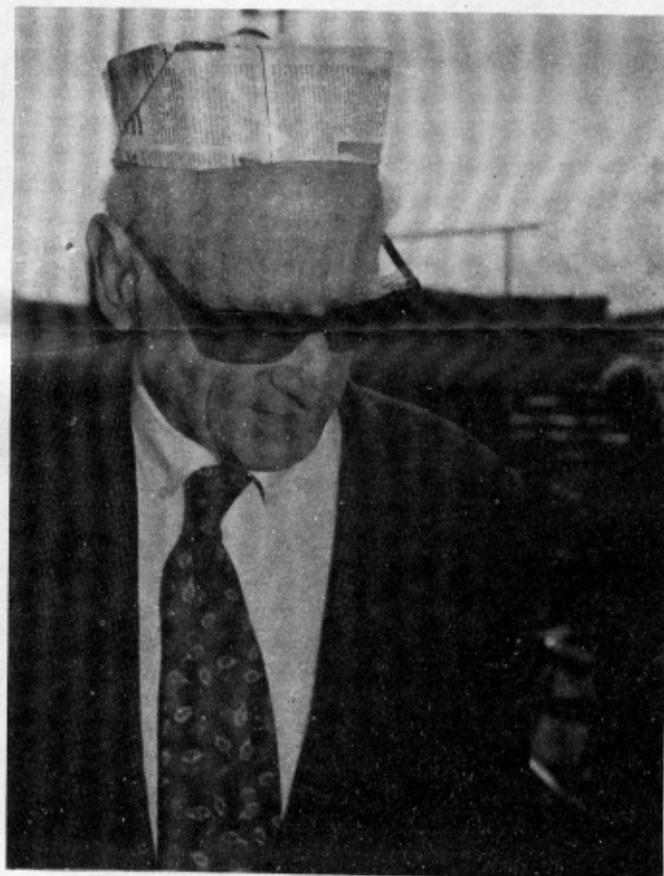
Naya Prokash, a publishing house from Calcutta's editor voiced his grievances and said, 'the publishing houses of Delhi are more in demand due to

the fact that people identify more with them and are familiar with their books, publishers from other cities have lesser sales, as they are comparatively less known". Some people walked around aimlessly.

PHILOSOPHER'S CAP

Arvind Gupta

Prof Michel Serres member of the French academy; is one of the most respected Western Philosophers. He teaches philosophy & History of Science at the Paris University of Stanford, USA. He has written over 20 books. One reason for his popularity is that he has made himself understandable to common people. He uses very simple language using commonly used words.



When Prof. Serres came for the WBF inauguration, he found the scorching sun unbearable. His colleague asked me whether I could give my newspaper so that Prof Serres could shield himself from the sun. I promptly offered to fold a cap from my newspaper. Here you can see Prof Serres in a 'KULU' cap, made from a newspaper. It didn't fit the philosopher's head too well, but hopefully protected his profound ideas from the hot Indian sun.

Schedule of Events

Today 8 February 1998

10.30 a.m.	Panel discussion on <i>The Need for Asian Links</i> Participants Prof. Charan Wadhwa - Moderator Ms Kishwar Naheed (Pakistan) Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan Shri Kartar Singh Duggal Prof. Amrik Singh Shri K Raghunath Shri Abul Hasan	Pragati Auditorium	National Book Trust, India
11.00 a.m.	Libsys Meet	Mezzanine Hall No. 5	Libsys Corporation
2.00 p.m.	Discussion on " <i>Desh ki Vartman Paristhitiyon mein Sahityakar ki Bhumika</i> "	Mezzanine Hall No. 5	Akhil Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad
2.00 p.m.	Meet the Author Arundhati Roy	Stall No. 33-40 Hall No. 1R	India Book Distributors
6.00 p.m.	An evening with British poet Mr Mathew Sweeney	British Council Division 17 Kasturbha Gandhi Marg New Delhi	British Council Division

Tomorrow 9 February 1998

9.30 a.m.	Seminar on <i>Services of Departmental Libraries in Decision-making</i>	Mezzanine Hall No. 5	Govt. Of India Librarians Association
10.00 a.m.	Awards presentation to writers of children's books	Pragati Auditorium	Children's Book Trust
10.30 a.m.	Reading from their works by British novelists Mr Farrukh Dhondy, Ms A L Kennedy and Ms Shena Mackay	Auditorium, First Floor, Hall No.8 (Hall of Special Displays)	British Council Division
2.00 p.m.	Buyer-seller meet of Indian exporters with foreign buyers	Auditorium, First Floor, Hall No.8 (Hall of Special Displays)	Chemicals and Allied Products Export Promotion Council
2.00 p.m.	Seminar on <i>Literary Agents, Authors and Publishers</i> Book Release Function <i>Free Will: Is It Really Free?</i> by Ms Savi Khanduri	Pragati Auditorium	Indian Society of Authors
5.30 p.m.	Kavi Sammelan	Mezzanine Hall No.5	Association of Nai Sarak Publishers and Booksellers
6.30 p.m.	British playwright Ms Winsome Pinnock meets Indian theatre personalities	National School of Drama Bahawalpur House New Delhi-110001	British Council Division

The views expressed in the signed articles do not necessarily reflect the official views of the NBT.



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Jnanpith Awardees Enthrall!

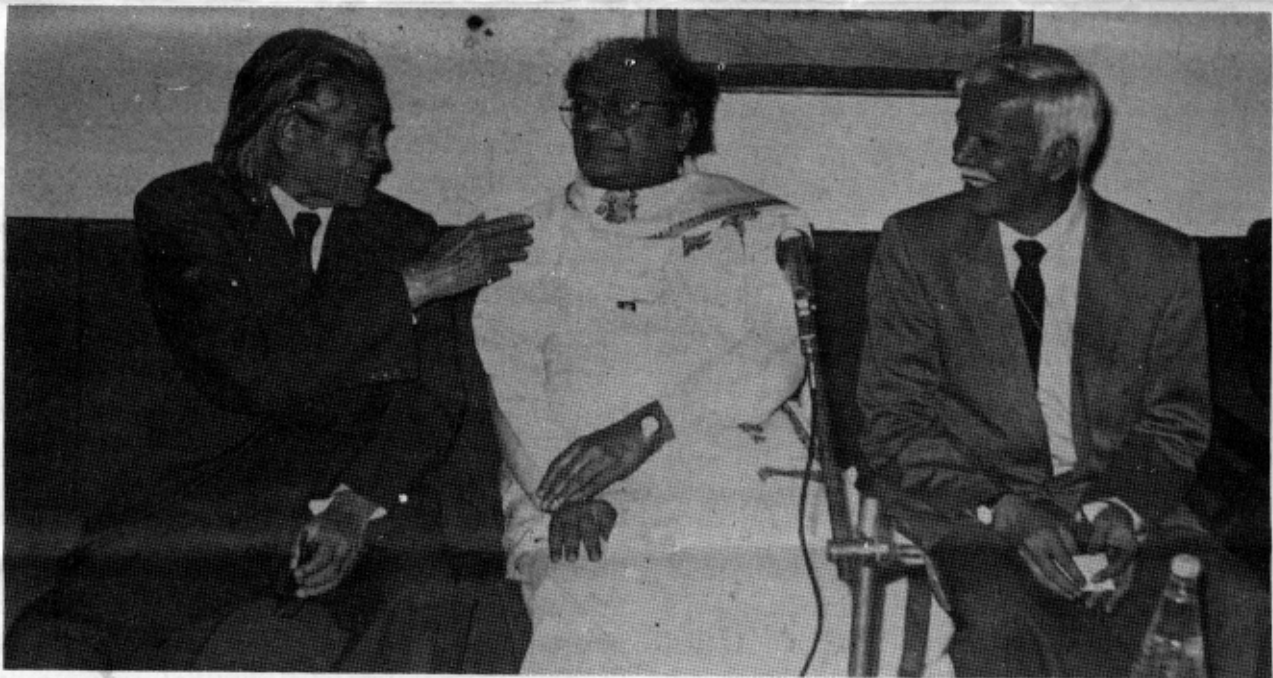
Arvind Gupta

The Pragati Lounge overflowed with people who wanted to meet two Jnanpith Awardees—Dr C Narayan Reddy and Shri Ali Sardar Jafri. Dr S Nadig Chairman, NBT welcomed the distinguished writers.

Dr Reddy, the eminent poet from Andhra Pradesh, was awarded the Jnanpith Award in 1988. He has received several laurels, including

He would fluently slip from English to Telugu, Urdu and Sanskrit. The richness of languages had lent a variety to his voice. His Jnanpith Award winning *Vishambhara* is a long poem about Man—the Hero. He read out the English rendering of his poem 'Earth, Man and Sky'.

How many times one has to chisel to make a sculpture/



the Padmashri (in 1997), Sahitya Akademi Award and the Soviet Land Nehru Award. Presently he is a member of Rajya Sabha. It is a strange coincidence that Dr Reddy, now 67 years old, has 67 books to his credit, out of which 50 volumes are on poetry. The rest are plays, ballets, literary essays and translations.

*How many times one has to paint a portrait /
Indulge not in tall talk O time/How many times
one has to die to live a living life.*

In a ghazal, he welcomed death with open arms. If death approaches me what will be my reaction/I feed her with milk, sing a lullaby and put her to sleep.

Shri Ali Sardar Jafri, aged 84, is the third Urdu litterateur to get the Jnanpith Award. He was inspired by Marxism and is one of the greatest Urdu poets today. For over 60 years, he has woven the tears of toilers and the dreams and aspirations of ordinary people into delicate and memorable verses. Shri Jafri deplored the two blatant lies being used against Urdu. Firstly, that it is a foreign language and secondly, that Urdu is the language of Pakistan. This is sad because it will lead to the decimation of this rich language. In the last 1000 years a composite Ganga-Jamuna culture has emerged in India. The Guru Granth Sahib is a glorious example of this synthesis.

We must stop the hate campaign against languages and instead, inspire people to learn as many regional languages as possible. Our languages have common roots and with the little effort they can be easily understood. A seed is one single language. When it sprouts you have dialects. They express emotions. As it grows into a tree and spreads into branches, they become languages, which have logic. He felt that if Hindi and Urdu had been taught simultaneously in the last fifty years, then apart from a more powerful language we would have had much more tolerance in the sub-continent.

Need to Critically Appraise History

Arvind Gupta & Benny Kurian

To apprise and understand literature available in Indian languages on freedom movement and to interact and interchange ideas with Indian litterateurs regarding influences of literature on freedom movement and vice-versa, a national seminar on *Contribution of Indian Litterateurs towards Freedom Movement of India, 1900-1947* was organised by Central Secretariat Library at Pragati Auditorium.

Inaugurating the two-day seminar, Shri Vasant Sathe, former Chairman, ICCR, emphasised the historic need for collating documents and literature produced in different Indian languages during the course of our struggle for Independence, particularly for the young generation. He was talking about the soul stirring writings of Gandhi, Tilak and host of others. He further said that the Britishers termed India as a barbaric nation and Macaulay's educational system tried to produce a generation of Indian clerks. Despite this, Bankim Chandra's Anandmath, Vivekananda's addresses, Abdul Kalam and Gokhale's writings imbued a new spirit of liberation in the hearts of the people.

In his keynote address, Shri Ashok Vajpayee said that there is a false impression of creative writers being 'apolitical' and not activists. On the contrary our national literature was part of the struggle for Independence. The

contribution of Bhatkhande, who collated *Bandish* and *Taals* from various parts of the country, or Ram Chandra Shukla who collated the history of the Hindi language was no less than the patriotic songs of Subramaniam Bharati. One need not have been a political activist to have played a role in the national struggle. Being a writer was enough—and sufficiently humane. The creative writings of romantic and spiritual writings of Sumitra Nandan Pant, Nirala and Prasad will outlast the nationalist writers.

The writers apart from the physical level were also fighting the colonialists at the intellectual level. Shri Vajpayee suggested a critical appraisal of source material. "Freedom in India", he said, "was also brought about by the creative writers' community, and not by the politically active writers alone."

The two-day seminar will discuss contributions of litterateurs in various Indian languages. Dr Indira Goswami, a celebrated name in Assamese literature, in her paper emphasised the role of Gandhiji in consolidating the movement and the contributions of folk poets and stalwarts like Gopinath Bordoloi, Lakshminath Bezbarua, Jyotiprasad Agarwala. While the contributions of writers from Bengal is only well-known, Dr Nabneeta Devsen's presentation further drew our attention to many other

interesting aspects of authors, particularly Bankim Chandra and Tagore.

Aware of the philosophical difficulty in approaching the topic, Dr Nagaraj, well-known Kannada critic, apologised for not adopting the encyclopaedic survey method. He traced emergent trends and themes in literature without focussing on individual writers. According to Dr Nagaraj, the concept of freedom to Kannada writers was far more complex than mere political freedom. It was linked to creativity and love. Dr Namvar Singh, scholar and critic, spoke on Premchand and his contributions. The seminar will conclude tomorrow and is expected to generate enough interest on the subject.

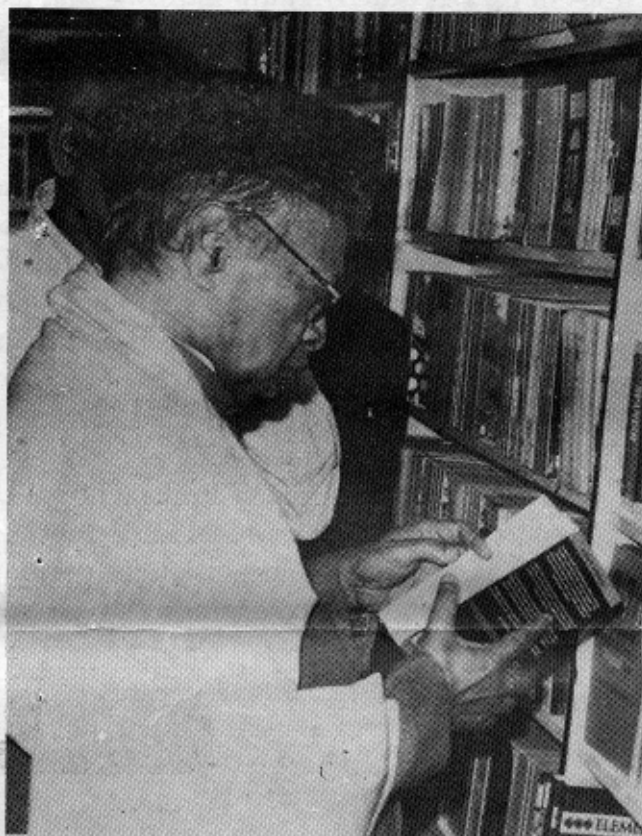
Hindi and Urdu Kavi-Sammelans

People descended in hordes to hear some of the best Hindi poets—Prof Kedar Nath Singh, Shri Ashok Vajpayee, Shri Vinod Kumar Shukla, Shri Liladhar Jagudi, Shri Alok Dhanva, Shri Devi Prasad Mishra, Ms Indu Jain, Ms Katyayani, Shri Upendra Kumar, Shri Manglesh Dabral and Dr Ganga Prasad Vimal. The Pragati Auditorium was jam packed. Shri Durgadas Gupta, Director NBT, welcomed the eminent poets and the enthusiastic audience. Prof Kedar Nath Singh presided over the Kavi-Sammelan and Dr Ganga Prasad Vimal successfully moderated it. The enthusiastic response from the audience was ample proof that they had thoroughly enjoyed this session.

Another Kavi Sammelan in Urdu thrilled the crowd. Eminent Pakistani poet Ahmad Faraz presided over the sammelan and jointly conducted it with Ms Kishvar Naheed from Pakistan. Other poets were—Shri Balraj Komal, Shri Makhmoor Saeedi, Shri Hayat Lucknowi, Ms Jameela Bano, Shri Riifat Sarosh, Ms Noor Jahan Sarwat from Delhi, Shri Shaharyar from Aligarh, Ms Malaka Nasim from Jaipur, Shri Aziz Parihar from Ludhiana and Shri Maher Mansoor from Bangalore

Some Significant Visitors at the World Book Fair

Unfazed by the current political excitement, former Prime Minister, Shri P V Narasimha Rao was lost in a different world—a world of books.



Quietly browsing through the books, winding his way through the crowded corridors of various Halls, Narasimha Rao for once seemed to be comfortable.

In spite of other preoccupations, Cabinet Secretary T S R Subramaniam could not resist visiting World Book Fair.

Despite his busy schedule Home Secretary, Shri B P Singh spent two hours in the midst of books.

Union Education Secretary, Shri P R Dasgupta also explored the ocean of books here.

Shakuntala Devi, mathematical wizard is here specially for WBF, signing books at MBD, meeting fans at Orient and releasing a book at Vision Books.

Workshop on Digital Publishing Concluded

Abul Hasan

The three-day workshop on Digital Publishing concluded on 12 February after a talk by the representatives of Modi Xerox on "On-demand Publishing". Devdutt Tripathi, Industry Marketing Manager of Graphic Arts in Modi Xerox informed the audience how one whole book could be produced in a day on docutech. Other advantages of the system, he added, were uniform quality of printing on every page whatever be the print run, no warehousing for unsold stocks as books are printed according to demand. The system did not allow any out-of-print edition since 135 pages could be printed in a minute and collation of pages was automatic. In terms of cost, the ideal print run was 1000 copies suited so well to Indian publishers.

Earlier Poornima Joshi of Tulika who spoke on "Desktop Publishing", said that the term was a misnomer as there was no provision for printing or publishing in the desktop computer which only

prepared a CRC (camera-ready-copy). Operating a computer, she showed how pages were edited and designed and pre-press work completed.

Abul Hasan, Director, Afro-Asian Book Council, summed up the programme emphasising that the traditional and modern technology have to co-exist and one need not replace the other. Both systems have their own advantages and limitations and publishers have to choose the best out of them to suit their own resources and requirements. The purpose of the workshop was to inform publishers what digital publishing has to offer to them and at what expense. Since the two were not mutually exclusive, publishers should strike a proper balance between software and hardware in various forms so as to derive maximum benefit from both and face the 21st century with courage and confidence. He hoped that the workshop would help the publishers in planning their future publishing programme properly.

Schedule of Events

Today 13 February 1998

9.30 a.m.	Seminar on <i>Contribution of Indian Litterateurs towards Freedom Movement in India —1900-1947</i>	Pragati Auditorium	Central Secretariat Library
9.30 a.m.	Seminar on <i>Challenges before the Librarians in the 21st Century</i>	Mezzanine Hall No.5	Association of Government Librarians and Information Specialists
3.30 p.m.	Indian Women Poets' Conference	Azad Bhavan Auditorium, (ICCR)	Sahitya Akademi and National Book Trust, India

Tomorrow 14 February 1998

9.30 a.m.	Seminar on Translation	Mezzanine Hall No 5	Embassy of France
10.30 a.m.	<i>Asia in the New Millennium</i>	Pragati Auditorium	National Book Trust, India

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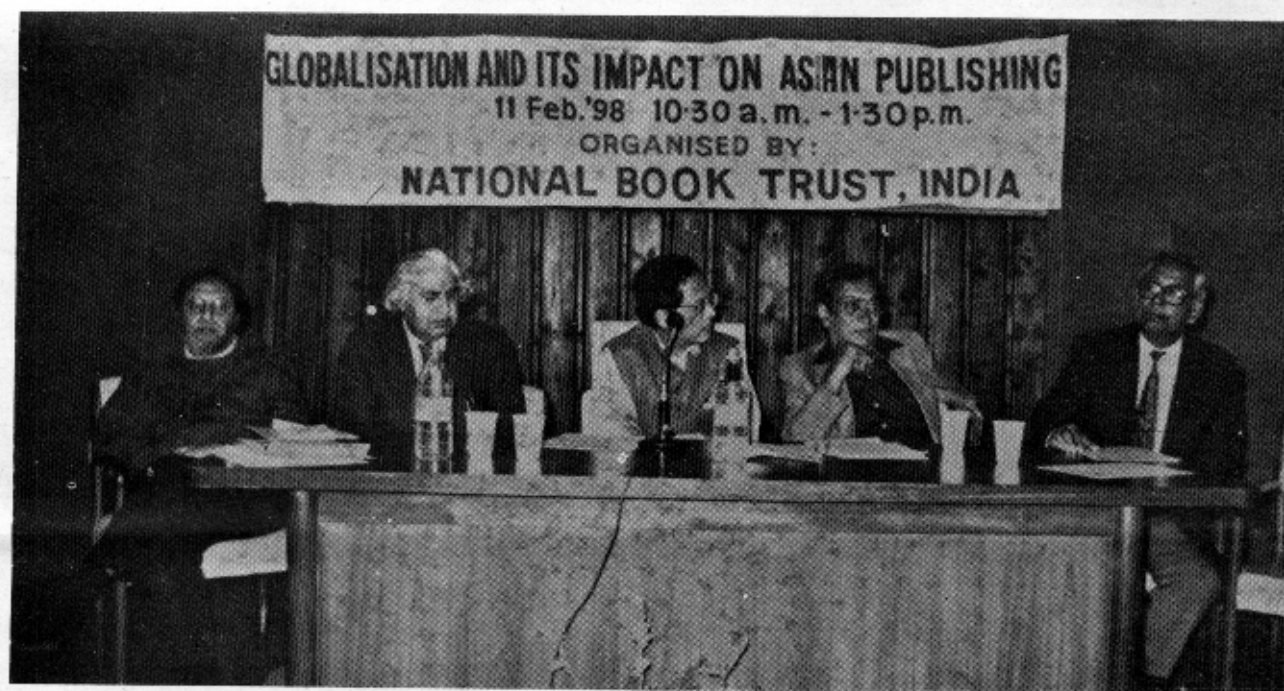
PEOPLE MUST CONTROL KNOWLEDGE

Arvind Gupta

The seminar on *Globalisation and its Impact on Asian Publishing*, was held at the Pragati Auditorium. The programme started late because of the taxi - auto strike today. The panelists included Shri Ahmad Faraz, eminent poet and Director of the National Book Foundation, Pakistan; Shri Mohiuddin Ahmed, executive member of the National Book Centre, Bangla-

Chairman NBT, welcomed the panelists and the audience.

Shri Ahmad Faraz in his brief presentation drew attention on the impact of modernisation and spread of the electronic media in developing societies. While on the one hand modern tools have made physical life easier, on the other hand dependency on them have increased. The entry



Shri Ashish Nandy, Shri Narendra Kumar, Prof. S Bhattacharya, Shri Ahmad Faraz & Shri Mohiuddin Ahmed

desh; Prof. Ashish Nandy, eminent writer and social critic and Shri Narendra Kumar, Managing Director of Har-Anand Publications. Prof. Sabyasachi Bhattacharya, writer and social-thinker was the moderator. Dr S Nadig,

of multinational corporations is beginning to effect the delicacies of life. The materialistic attitude has become deeply ingrained and has brought intolerance. Creativity has taken a back seat and peace has become a low priority. He felt

that the book was basic and could not be substituted by CD-ROMs and the electronic media. He welcomed foreign participation but not at the cost of upsetting the local cultural matrix. He made a fervent plea for maintaining a balance between material attitudes and aesthetic values.

As a practising publisher, Sri Mohiuddin Ahmed raised some pertinent questions regarding the globalisation of publishing in Asia. What will be the impact of the MNC's on the indigenous industry? Will it get marginalised? Are the local publishers forced into an unequal battle with the giant MNCs? Do we have the capital and technical skills to compete with them? Are we crying wolf to maintain mediocrity? He felt that structural reforms were initiated in developing Asian economies by the IMF and World Bank to make them complimentary to the western market. There will be transitional problems.

In India only 3% of the books were published by the public sector. The private sector, he felt, because of its inherent efficiency was best geared to spot the opportunities. Foreign publishers like Oxford, Macmillan, Longman quickly adjusted themselves to suit local conditions. They were instrumental in providing a pool of skilled editors. He felt that the old MNCs will act as role models for new entrants. He felt that there was no threat to the book from the electronic media. As the visual image is very difficult to retain, people will keep reverting back to books. He could not visualise children of poor Asian villages to be glued to the computer screen, in the distant future.

Prof. Ashish Nandy, cited the inferiority of Indian publishers. "If books come to us, they cannot be the best. For the best would have been printed abroad" he quoted an Indian publisher. He decried the lack of contact between Asian scholars. "I have to travel 7,000 kms to London to meet a Pakistani scholar, though Lahore is just a 20 minutes flight from Delhi", he said. The global capital of knowledge is also trying to co-opt the third world's

right to dissent. The West is ensuring that even the dissent for its "developmental models" emanate only from the West only. He cited the example of writer-environmentalist Claude Alvare's laudable effort of setting up the Other India Book Depot, which would print only non-western critiques of development. The spread of globalisation is creating a space within it—of alternatives and dissent. Publishers will do well to recognise these voices.

Shri Narendra Kumar gave a historic overview of publishing in India. The first MNC publisher came to India in 1903. The PL 480 funds after Independence were used to promote American science and technology books in India. This stultified the nascent indigenous publishing industry.

The Indian State has always protected school text books, terming it as sensitive and not allowing the private publishing in this key area. The Indian publishers have to work under heavy odds. On the other hand foreign publishers have the full backing of their State to promote their authors. On any particular day the British Council Division holds at least a dozen meetings in any part of the world to promote its authors. On the other hand an Indian publisher has virtually no State support and has to work in an environment of low literacy, low incomes, with no public library system and with no culture of reading. He suggested Asian publishers to form a consortium for co-publication and mutual co-operation.

Prof. Bhattacharya summed up the discussion by saying if one raises any doubts about globalisation one is immediately termed as parochial. He felt that globalisation of the world of the mind should mean universalisation—with its attendant free flow of information, irrespective of the sources. He cautioned against such commodification of knowledge which was not under the control of the members of the society. He ended by offering Gandhiji's lucid advice of allowing winds of change to blow from all directions, but refusing to be swept by any of them.

Books are Bridges

Deep Saikia

World Book Fair. For someone its a centre of pilgrimage. Others see here a reflection of world intellect. For bookworms it is a treasurehouse of knowledge. And what not! Such fair has tremendous potential to give a new horizon to our bilateral relationships with other countries of the globe. Here at Hall No.19 one can see Ms. Nilli Cohen with the national flags of India and Israel. She feels that both the countries can come nearer through translation of more and more Hebrew books to English, Hindi and other Indian languages. She acknowledges special help from NBT in this regard. Nicolas Belorgey from France finds the crowd response very encouraging. Sasya from Pilgrims Book House, Kathmandu, says that maps and guides to Nepal and books on Buddhism and Tibet are more in demand. Ali Balali from Iran is overwhelmed to see people's interest in Iranian culture particularly new miniature from Iran. Foreign as well as Indian participants are happy with the arrangements here. But there are little aberrations as well. Some are not happy with the display shelves. Others complain for limited space. But people here are busy exploring this mesmerising world of books.

A DREAM COME TRUE

It was a dream come true for Dr Keshab Chandra Meher, prominent author, pressman and an expert on the weaving tradition of Western Orissa when he visited the World Book Fair in 1996. Then he decided to visit the World Book Fair everytime. Dr Meher visited all the stalls from hall No.1 to 6 on 10 February 1998 from forenoon till closing of the shutters. In reply to our questions on the arrangement of the World Book Fair this time he responded as follows:

Q What types of books you found more in this World Book Fair?

A I found more course related or say, text or reference books. It appears more number of publishers are keen on making quick money.

Q How did you find the facilities provided by NBT for the visitors during this World Book Fair?

A I found the facilities very good. But, NBT should make an "Authors' Lounge" here so that authors of various Indian languages can meet each other there and exchange ideas.

Q Will you visit the next World Book Fair?

A Certainly. It has now become an emotional binding for me.

Interviewed by Manas Ranjan Mahapatra

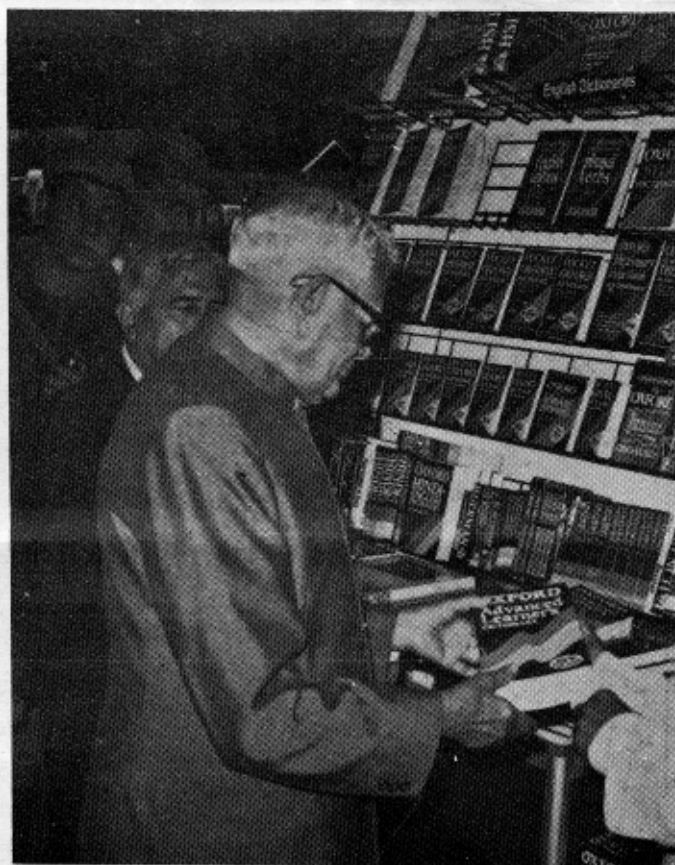
The civilisation we have,
I think in the near future, will ensure
a seminar in Europe and America
on the subject:

*Asianisation and its impact on
American and European Publishing*

- Rashid Haider

Director

National Book Centre, Bangladesh



Former President Shri R Venkataraman in the World Book Fair

I like to peek
 Inside a book
 Where all the picture people look

I like to peek
 At them and see
 If they are peeking back at me

-Myra Cohen Livingston

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9.30 a.m.	Seminar on <i>Contribution of 'Indian Litterateurs towards Freedom Movement in India —1900-1947'</i>	Pragati Auditorium	Central Secretariat Library
10.00 a.m.	Workshop on Digital Publishing	Mezzanine Hall No.5	Afro-Asian Book Council
11.30 a.m.	Inauguration of <i>Women in Publishing</i>	Mezzanine Hall No. 2	The Book Review Literary Trust
3.00 p.m.	Jnanpith awardees' meet Participants: Smt. Qurratul-Ein Haider Shri Narayan Reddy Shri Ali Sardar Jafri	Pragati Lounge Hall No 1	National Book Trust, India
5.30 p.m.	Urdu Kavi Sammelan Participants: Shri Balraj Komal Shri Makhmoor Saeedi Shri Hayat Lucknowi Ms. Jameela Bano Ms. Noor Jahan Sarwat Shri Aziz Parihar Shri Maher Mansoor Shri Irfan Siddiqui Shri Shaharyar Shri Riifat Sarosh Ms. Malaka Nasim Ms. Kishvar Naheed (Pakistan) Mr. Ahmad Faraz (Pakistan)	Pragati Auditorium	National Book Trust, India

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Read It or Scan It!

Seminar on The New Dimensions of Services of Library & Information Services

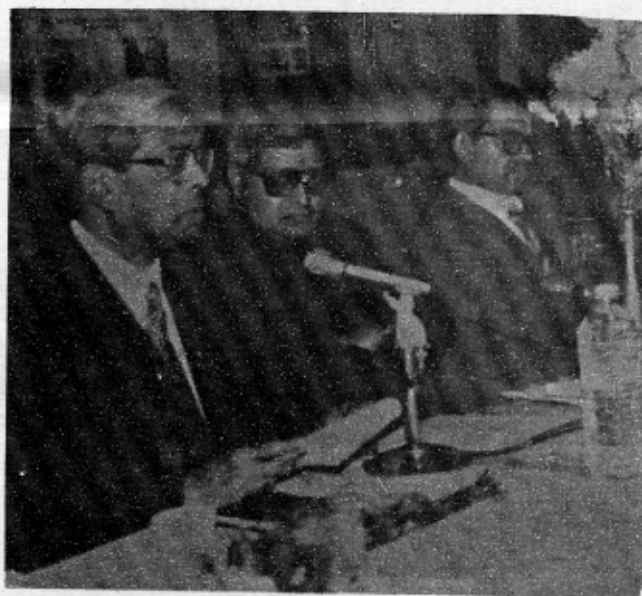
Deep Saikia

The seminar on Library Services started at 10.55 a.m. at Mezzanine Hall No 5. The panel consisted of several luminaries like Dr. R V Vaidyanatha Ayyar, Secretary, Department of culture, Shri M Venkateswaran, Additional Secretary, Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance, Shri S B Mahapatra, Additional Secretary, Department of Wasteland Development and Shri A Ramaswamy, Principal Commissioner, Delhi Development Authority. The main thrust of the seminar was the new dimensions of Library and Information services in Government Departmental libraries. Mr. D R Kalia, retired Director, DPL

delivered the inaugural speech. In his keynote address, Shri Durgadas Gupta traced the origin of books as an instrument for dissemination of recorded message. He also cited the modern technologies like micro-computers, optical disks, CD-ROM and their tangible effect on the conventional library system. Sooner or later we might have to face a situation when a reader gets optical disks instead of printed books in the public libraries. In view of these Shri Gupta asked for a revision of curricula of library schools to face the new

situation. Nevertheless it is unlikely that electronic books can eventually replace printed books 'as it can be read anywhere without the help of an electronic reader'. The panellists made a fervent plea

to provide necessary finances and infrastructure to ensure an efficient library and information service by the government departmental libraries. The need of the hour is that all government departmental libraries should be exposed to the latest challenges of operations and services. Such training programmes may be looked after by ISTM and IIPM with the help of experienced librarians as



Durgadas Gupta, A Ramaswamy & Dr R V V Ayyar

well as additional inputs from subject experts from NIC. The necessary infrastructure to be urgently provided include adequate machine, manpower, training, space and finance. The budgetary allocation for departmental libraries for purchasing Pentium based PC is inadequate and it needs to be enhanced. Most of the participating librarians mentioned the anomalies in the 5th Pay Commission and they requested Mr. R V Vaidyanatha Ayyar to look into them.

any advance in India for her book, she got an advance from her foreign buyers. Penguin and Harper Collins, pay an advance of about Rs 10,000 or Rs 20,000 to their authors, but that too is not adequate.

Ms. Urvashi Butalia of *Kali for Women*, said more programmes should be held on TV promoting authors. She said in her opinion, association with literary agents in India was too early to begin, as a great number of our books are academic and no literary agents are required for this. She felt, too many books were published in

India, there were not enough readers, and not enough buyers.

Mr. S C Sethi, Director of Jaico Publishing House, said that authors should have a regular dialogue with publishers. Publishing a book or rejecting it entirely is up to a publisher as he has the option to accept or reject the book. The jacket of every book should be so attractive that a buyer would automatically want to buy the book. "A jacket is the mirror of a book", he said. The books should be priced reasonably as well.

BRITISH NOVELISTS READ THEIR WORKS

Arvind Gupta

Courtesy the British Council Division and the NBT, three contemporary British novelists—Mr. Farrukh Dhondy, Ms. A L Kennedy and Ms. Shena Mackay read their short stories and excerpts from their novels at the World Book Fair. Dr. S Nadig, Chairman NBT, welcomed the distinguished novelists and the audience, which largely comprised college girls, studying English literature for their B.A.. It appeared, as if this niche crowd, was probably instructed by their college instructors to compulsorily attend this seminar. Ordinary bibliophiles and visitors to the Book Fair gave this seminar a go by.

Dr. S Nadig started by saying that we are all related to each other in some way, though it takes some time to discover this relationship. "We are all like logs on the high sea. The movement of waves will bring us together", he quoted the poet Matthew Arnold.

Prof. Harish Trivedi, Head of the Department of English Literature, University of Delhi was the moderator. He opined that "there was a particular thrill to have it read by those who have written it.. We cannot have great authors of yore like Shakespeare, Milton come and read their works to us. We certainly can have some contemporary writers do

that. There is a great thrill listening to an author read her/his own works. Its like having the play enacted from a script."

And thrill it certainly was. Ms. Shena Mackay read a passage from her novel *Orchard on Fire*, which was shortlisted for the Booker Award in 1996. Her work was full of British humour and despite the fact that it was just an extract from a full novel, it was able to convey her characteristic style very well.

Mr. Farrukh Dhondy was born in India in 1944. His father was an officer in the Indian Army. He has always maintained very close contacts with the land of his birth. For the last 13 years he has been a full time writer. He chose to read a story *Black Dog*, from his collection *Poona Company*. He chose it because it had an Indian setting. In this story he faithfully captured the ambience of Poona in the early 50's -Lal Deval, Sachapir Street, Sarbatwala Chowk and his childhood recollections.

Ms. A.L.Kennedy first read a passage from her novel *Original Bliss*, which was about two people falling in love and then separating. She also read a horror story with fairly gory and macabre details. Her last story titled *Gondwana*, was about a father telling a story to his 4 year old daughter.

"I am still a librarian" says Delhi Chief Minister Sri Sahib Singh Verma. Though he is on leave from the University of Delhi, his position as a Librarian in Bhagat Singh College is still secure. Recently he opened 20 new libraries in the main community centres of Delhi.

The World Book Fair is the real "workshop" where every publisher worth his books must participate. It rates us and tells us where we stand. It also helps us to get an inkling of the readers' taste, says Sri Harish Chand Sharma- Prakashan Sansthan, Delhi.